

HOUSE BILL 1388

By Jernigan

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49, Chapter 7, Part 2, relative to a plan addressing the prevention of unintended pregnancies on college campuses.

WHEREAS, fifty-six percent of all pregnancies of any age group are reported by women themselves as unintended; and

WHEREAS, pregnancies in eighteen and nineteen-year-olds accounted for seventy-four percent of all teen births; and

WHEREAS, in 2015, forty-five percent of births were from women age eighteen to twenty-four, and seventy-seven percent of all women on TennCare who gave birth between age eighteen and twenty-four were unmarried; and

WHEREAS, among women on TennCare between the ages of eighteen and twenty-four, twenty percent had another baby within twenty-three months after giving birth in 2014; and

WHEREAS, the American Association of Community Colleges reports that at least ten percent of female students who drop out of community college do so as a result of an unintended birth; and

WHEREAS, the National Conference of State Legislatures reports that Arkansas and Mississippi have successfully enacted legislation to address unplanned pregnancy among college students; and

WHEREAS, the National Conference of State Legislatures calculated that the annual public cost of teen childbearing in Tennessee is almost two-hundred-thirty million dollars; and

WHEREAS, community colleges and universities in Tennessee provide a critical venue to address the prevention of unplanned pregnancies among a significant number of older teens and young adults; now, therefore,

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49, Chapter 7, Part 2, is amended by adding the following language as a new section:

(a) The commission shall, in collaboration with the board of regents, the boards of trustees of publicly funded universities, and the boards of trustees of community colleges, create a task force to develop a plan to address the prevention of unintended pregnancies among older teens and single students by November 1, 2017. The plan shall be implemented on July 1, 2018.

(b) The task force shall include, at a minimum, one (1) representative appointed by each school within the board of regents system, one (1) representative appointed by each school within the University of Tennessee system, one (1) representative from the department of education, one (1) representative from the department of health, and one (1) representative from the state board of education, the executive director of the commission or the executive director's designee, and any other relevant stakeholder as determined necessary by the commission.

(c) The commission shall provide support services to the task force created under this section, including, but not limited to, calling the task force to order and facilitating communications among task force members. The commission shall report the task force's findings, recommendations, and plan, including recommended legislation or rules, to the education committee of the senate, education administration and planning committee of the house of representatives, and the education instruction and programs committee of the house of representatives by July 1, 2018. The task force shall cease to exist upon completion of the task force's report, recommendations, and plan implementation.

(d) The members of each task force shall serve without compensation, but shall be eligible for reimbursement for travel expenses in accordance with the provisions of

the comprehensive travel regulations as promulgated by the department of finance and administration and approved by the attorney general and reporter.

(e) The plan required by subsection (a) shall:

(1) Incorporate unplanned pregnancy prevention information into activities for all incoming students, including, but not limited to, student success courses, residence halls, advising, and programming during student orientation;

(2) Integrate information that is recognized as medically accurate by the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists about the prevention of unplanned pregnancy into academic courses if and when appropriate, including abstinence education;

(3) Identify opportunities to raise awareness of and provide resources for the prevention of unplanned pregnancies across the entire student population, including those living on campus;

(4) Identify no-cost or low-cost policies and strategies to address the prevention of unplanned pregnancy and to promote student success and completion;

(5) Collaborate with the student health services, local departments of health, federally qualified health centers, and local agencies to promote access to care and dissemination of information;

(6) Identify other topics or issues relating to the prevention and reduction of unplanned pregnancies among the college student population;

(7) Encourage colleges to conduct needs assessments, implement existing best practices and sustainable strategies, and coordinate pregnancy prevention efforts through existing ongoing activities on sexual assault prevention

and education, sexually transmitted infection prevention, and HIV prevention, based on the unique needs of the specific campus;

(8) Identify process and outcome measures to track and submit annually to evaluate the reach and success of the initiative; and

(9) Identify the costs to implement the action plan at qualifying institutions.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.